

After being licensed as an Amateur Operator for going on 35 years now, I strongly oppose the elimination of the Morse Code requirement from the licensing structure. We have already witnessed operators who now receive their Technician Class license who do not understand the Rules and Regulations nor do they make any effort to further advance their knowledge of proper operation or procedures.

While this is a hobby, Amateur Radio Operators have often been called upon to aid in communications due to their vast knowledge of various ways to communicate. There have been many times we have actually been looked at as Professionals rather than Amateurs.

With the Code requirement at the 5 WPM at this time, this is already like a 'gimme' in order to advance on to the General Class. If we drop the 5 WPM at this time, where do we go to next? Do we drop the written test in a few years? Do we just include an application for License with every Amateur Radio sold? I often wonder with our new licenses issued being on the down side from the years past, is this a reflection that a lot of folks are losing interest in a hobby that is not worth working a little for. Would we want to visit a Doctor who did not study and practice for his profession, or a electrician working on our homes electrical wiring who only took a written test with no practical experience? All of these folks put forth the effort to get where they are now and it was not just given to them as we are looking to do with Amateur Licensing.

A lot of fellow Amateurs that I know got their start in Amateur Radio the same as I did by getting away from the Citizens Band radio trash. We did this for love of communications, experimenting, and the advancement of Amateur Radio Communications. As for myself, I was extremely lucky to have a Father who had been involved in Amateur Radio from back in the mid 40's and had taught me a lot. I just hate to think what dropping or lowering the Morse Code requirement will do to this wonderful (Professional) Amateur Radio Hobby!

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